

# 1. Definition

Antihumanism is a relatively new philosophy, which emerged along with critique of industrialism in the modern era, particularly after WWI. Antihumanism gathered strength from the nihilism of post-1960s counterculture and is now evolving rapidly, so there's already a wide spectrum. At the moderate end are mainstream novelists such as Kurt Vonnegut ("Breakfast of Champions"), Margaret Atwood ("Oryx and Crake"), and Paul Theroux ("O-Zone"). All of these books contain antihuman concepts and observations, though their authors probably wouldn't use the word. There are also many antihuman movies, too many to list, but at a minimum "Eraserhead" by David Lynch, "THX-1138" by George Lucas, and "Soylent Green" should be mentioned. At the extreme end are actual organizations such as The Church of Euthanasia, VHEMT (Voluntary Human Extinction Movement), and GLF (Gaia Liberation Front).

In the sciences antihumanism is usually expressed by paleontologists and biologists, and increasingly by climate scientists. Some current examples are [Jeremy Jackson](#) and [Kevin Anderson](#). Edward O. Wilson is best known for his work on biological diversity, but he was also the first biologist to seriously propose that intelligence snuffs itself out, and that this solves Fermi's paradox: we don't receive messages from the stars because by the time an alien life form has enough power to transmit that far, it's already on the threshold of annihilating itself, and the odds of its brief blaze of glory lining up with ours are infinitesimal. This is closely related to the view that life (particularly human life) creates short-term order at the cost of accelerating the entropy of its environment, in stark contrast to the idealistic Gaia theory. For example paleontologist Peter Ward's [Medea Hypothesis](#) demolishes the notion that life is self-regulating, and compares life to a drunk stumbling around in a darkened room.

Antihumanism can be usefully contrasted with humanism. Humanism derives from the ancient Greek notion that man is the measure of all things, and that without human existence nothing would have value. Concealed within this is the assumption that only humans experience value. This assumption has no basis in biology, but is nonetheless one of the pillars of modern civilization, because it provides justification for extermination of other species. The denial of intrinsic value to nonhuman life is the essence of speciesism, and is closely related to the dogma of dominion, i.e. that it's man's destiny to subjugate all other living things (a concept that Edward O. Wilson attacked in his "Consilience").

Beyond humanism is transhumanism, sometimes known as futurism or extropianism. This is the belief that not only is man the measure of all things, but the only part of him that matters is his mind, and the sooner his mind is freed from the limitations of biology the better. The moderate form is life extension and cryogenics, while the extreme form is downloading human intelligence into robots and conquering outer space, like the Daleks on Dr. Who. Famous transhumanists include Ray Kurzweil, and Stephen Hawking who recently stated that humanity's only hope is to escape to other planets before we destroy this one. Antihumanists regard transhumanists as archenemies, due to their flagrant unconcern for nonhumans. From the antihuman point of view, transhumanism bears a striking resemblance to Christianity. Both are escapist, characterized by unshakable belief that humans belong somewhere else, i.e. Heaven/Outer Space. Both express contempt for biology, e.g. Catholic repression of sexuality, and transhumanist use of derogatory terms such as meatspace. Both are motivated by fear of death, and presumably of life too, since

one engenders the other (literally via natural selection). Both reject the limits of existence on earth, and promulgate a fantasy that justifies exceeding those limits. The danger isn't that the fantasy will be realized, but that deluded people will make earth unsuitable for life far sooner than would have otherwise been the case.

Unlike mere misanthropy, antihumanism is distinguished by reverence for nonhuman life. Biological diversity is considered an axiomatic value, and contrasted with the ugliness and sterility of human monoculture. Earth is described as a "wrecked planet" (Kurt Vonnegut), and various measures are called for to prevent further damage, the most obvious being drastic reduction or elimination of the human population. The pre-human fecundity of earth is idolized, and provides a reference for demonstrating impoverishment of ecosystems. This relates to the shifting baseline syndrome posited by Jeremy Jackson and others, in which each successive generation wrongly assumes the degree of biological diversity they observe was also seen in previous generations.

The central paradox of antihumanism is that humans evolved, and are therefore no more or less natural than any other living thing. Stephen Jay Gould argued convincingly that evolution doesn't converge on anything except fitness for conditions: there are no good or bad organisms, just ones that survive, and mostly ones that don't. Richard Dawkins went even further and described organisms as mere transport for genes, in which case the DNA we share with all other eukaryotes is the winner, regardless of what humans do. One proposed resolution is that humans are malignant life, as argued by A. Kent MacDougall in [Humans As Cancer](#). This sidesteps the problem however, because cancer is also natural, and closely related to viruses. The higher-order question is ethical: why is malignancy bad, and from what point of view is its badness determined?

The paradox of human naturalness could possibly be resolved by arguing that sentience is not intelligence but the ability to feel pain and pleasure. What distinguishes humans from other primates is the existential suffering that results from self-knowledge, particularly fear of death. Since humans have such capacity for suffering, we should have equally developed empathy, but instead we succumb to corruption, creating hellish conditions for humans and nonhumans alike. Thus despite our naturalness, humans can and should be blamed for wrecking the planet, precisely because we're capable of feeling remorse for having done so. If we're unable to reform ourselves, as seems increasingly to be the case, we should have the decency to step aside and give other organisms a chance. Apes might re-evolve back into us, but they might not, and either way it won't be our fault.

## 2. Evolution

Though people are beginning to grasp the complexity and fragility of the Earth system, and the enormous extent of our impact on it, they continue to call for sustainable development. This reflects a disastrous misunderstanding of timescales. Earth's species are shaped by biological evolution over tens or hundreds of thousands of years, whereas human development is shaped by cultural evolution over centuries or even decades.

Humans are the first species capable of deliberately violating Daniel Quinn's cardinal rule of biology: a species can compete but it can't eliminate all its competition. We're currently waging a war of extermination against the vast majority of species, and we're winning, for the moment. Despite having evolved like any other animal, we behave as though we're distinct from the rest of the Earth system, and not bound by it. Many of the forces shaping our development--e.g. technology, religion, social justice--are not operative in biological evolution, so evolutionary history is not necessarily a good predictor of our behavior.

The Earth is an unstable physical environment in which many attributes are chaotic, i.e. prone to positive feedback. Evolution can be seen as a positive feedback (self-replication) more or less restrained by a negative feedback (death). Evolution has succeeded on Earth because its chaotic nature is well-matched to a physical environment dominated by feedback. Given the history of chaos in Earth's geology, hydrology, climate, etc., it shouldn't be surprising that the living system that evolved here is also chaotic.

Earth's chaotic changes can be extreme, but they usually occur slowly enough so that life can adapt to them without loss of diversity, via relatively rapid feedbacks of its own. Life's reliance on feedback makes it well-suited to deal with chaos in the physical environment, but only so long as those changes mostly occur on sufficiently long timescales, relative to the timescale of biological evolution.

Life is not well-suited to respond to human cultural evolution, because the timescale of cultural change is orders of magnitude shorter than the timescale of biological evolution. When changes occur too rapidly over an extended period, life can't keep up, and reverts to low trophic levels, or in non-technical language, de-evolves. Intricate and highly interdependent systems which evolved over millions of years are rapidly replaced by the species equivalent of scar tissue: weeds and roaches on land, algae and jellyfish in the ocean. If war against life continued for long enough, life could in theory be pruned all the way back to cyanobacteria or even viruses, though presumably humans would join the ranks of extinct species long before such a low point was reached.

This relates to the idea that life is a form of negative entropy. Entropy is used here not just in its narrow thermodynamic sense of heat dissipation, but also in the sense of information loss. A high-entropy state is homogenous and devoid of differences, e.g. dust drifting in space. Compared to much of the universe, Earth was already significantly heterogeneous even before life began. Earth's unusually low entropy provided auspicious conditions for evolution, which thrives on differences.

Earth will eventually be baked to a cinder, but meanwhile life resists and temporarily defeats entropy, by evolving and sustaining a chaotic balance of species which is exquisitely complex and heterogeneous. Humans also generate complexity, but with an important difference: human complexity accelerates Earth's entropy and is therefore unsustainable. Examples include dissipation of stored energy (via extraction and consumption), loss of genetic information (species extinction), and replacement of low-entropy diversity (e.g. tropical rain forests) with high-entropy monoculture (e.g. industrial agriculture and ranching). Many of the cradles of humanity--including Iran, Iraq and much of the Mediterranean coast--were once heavily forested,

and are now reduced to a high-entropy state (semiarid or desert) after only a few thousand years of human occupation.

Evolution can be described as self-replicating agents in an environment of differential survival. Self-replicating agents always have the potential for feedback, i.e. runaway growth followed by a crash and extinction; it's an unavoidable built-in risk. Each agent maximizes its opportunities, and grows until it reaches limits, such as lack of resources or increased predation. It's a precarious strategy, and it tends to create arms races.

Evolution converges on arms races between increasingly sophisticated apex predators. These arms races set the stage for the emergence of a super-predator with the linguistic capabilities required for cultural evolution. The first species to achieve significant cultural evolution inevitably out-competes and dominates all the others, and spreads rapidly, exterminating any species not immediately useful in order to monopolize Earth's carrying capacity for itself. The damage occurs in an eye blink relative to geological time, far faster than biological systems can adapt, and occurs on a sufficiently massive scale to make Earth unsuitable for life, perhaps permanently.

Adaptations such as complex sensory organs have been lost, and then re-evolved again from scratch, repeatedly. Even if humans were to disappear magically in an instant, what would prevent a similarly opportunistic super-predator from evolving to infest the Earth? According to the inexorable logic of genetic selection, nothing.

It seems that Edward Wilson's claim that "intelligence snuffs itself out" is likely correct, and that evolution ultimately contains the seeds of its own destruction. If so, this must be the solution to Fermi's paradox, i.e. why we don't find signs of intelligent life in the universe. At the instant a species becomes powerful enough to transmit a signal over such vast distances, it's already on the threshold of self-annihilation; the odds of its blaze of glory lining up with ours are vanishingly small.

The images from our telescopes are clear enough to grasp that the universe is a harsh and violent place. The majority of it is empty and freezing, and much of the rest is filled with dust and barren chunks of rock, or exploding gas at millions of degrees Kelvin. Even if life is occurring elsewhere, odds are we'll never know about it. For all practical purposes we and our fellow travelers on Earth are alone in the universe. It seems intolerable that against such odds, all the richness and diversity of life could evolve here, only to climax in such a ruthless and self-defeating species.

## **2.5. Solutions**

Solutions can be divided into two broad categories: those that directly eliminate some or all of the human population, and those that modify the human population's behavior, whether voluntarily or involuntarily. In the cancer analogy, the first solution--referred to here as the eliminationist strategy--can be likened to surgery or chemotherapy, effectively cutting out, poisoning or otherwise eliminating the problem. As with cancer there is some risk the host won't survive the operation (we had to destroy the village in order to save it) but the certain destruction

that will follow from inaction greatly outweighs this risk. In addition this risk is quite low as demonstrated by life's amazing resilience in the face of many previous global catastrophes. Even if we were to detonate all of our nuclear weapons at once, the earth would certainly still support bacteria, and probably simple plants and insects. It's plausible, even likely that 50,000 years later, evolution would already be well under way again, with countless new species filling the many vacant niches, whereas the odds of humans (or even most mammals) surviving such an event are close to zero.

Short of nuclear holocaust, what other intervention strategies could act quickly enough to be decisive? Perhaps a pandemic, as explored in the fictional movie "Twelve Monkeys," but this is far-fetched. In reality it would be very difficult to engineer a pathogen suitably virulent and distribute it widely enough. Humans are [weedy](#) by nature, and therefore amazingly adaptable and resourceful. It's likely that some portion of humanity would develop a resistance or otherwise survive the scourge. Even assuming plans were made for a second round to finish off the survivors, the chaos resulting from the total collapse of industrial society would make it difficult to ensure success. The survivors might coexist relatively peacefully with their environment for a time, as aboriginal peoples did for most of human history, but cultural evolution would still occur, setting the stage for a resurgence of agriculture, accumulation of wealth, division of labor, and all the rest of civilization. This points to a fundamental problem with the eliminationist (surgical) solution: as with cancer, there's no easy way to be sure that we got it all. It's too easy to allow a remnant of humanity to survive, and since the surgery implies loss of the tools required for further surgery (nuclear weapons, germ warfare, etc.) there's no second chance.

Radical surgery squanders what little control human society offers us on a one-shot strategy that's likely to fail. In contrast, behavior modification strategies don't immediately render us powerless, and therefore allow time for false starts and gradual improvement of techniques. The most important goal of behavior modification should be to deprive people of any hope whatsoever that the current social and economic order can persist. People must be absolutely convinced that industrial society is unworkable and must be completely and utterly destroyed. The first sentence of Kaczynski's manifesto--"The Industrial Revolution and its consequences have been a disaster for the human race"--must become as obvious to humanity as the fact that the sun will rise tomorrow.

Even more importantly, people must be convinced that accumulation of wealth is shameful. There is considerable precedent for organizing society around repudiation of wealth. Many successful aboriginal societies were organized in this way, and their ethical systems, often centered on the intrinsic value of Earth and all its creatures, will provide useful models. In a wealth-repudiating society, the leader will be expected to set an example, by exhibiting the most altruism. The drive to accumulate possessions must be seen as a form of mental illness. Gluttony, materialism, and the desire to live a soft, decadent life at the expense of others must be regarded as pathetic and contemptible, just as many people now regard immigrants, homeless people, and other have-nots as pathetic and contemptible. Mild regressions such as laziness will be cured by ridicule or some similar form of peer pressure. Addiction to technology and possessions will be replaced by intimate knowledge of Earth's living systems and how to coexist sustainably within them.

Obviously this is an ambitious program of behavior modification, given the current prevalence of materialism, and the extreme class stratification which permits the ultra-rich to exist almost literally in a world of their own. A possible first step would be to directly attack the ultra-rich, for example by assassinating the world's wealthiest individuals, one at a time, in descending order of wealth. The first few assassinations would be relatively straightforward due their unexpected nature, but once the pattern became clear, the elite would take steps to protect themselves. Picture terrified billionaires cowering in their gated compounds, unable to leave without heavily armed escorts. It's a step in the right direction, and certainly better than watching them strut around smugly buying everything.

In practice, targeting the oligarchy would present many tactical difficulties, including the obvious problems of avoiding capture and attracting sufficiently skilled assassins. Assuming a victim's wealth was inherited by a single heir, should that heir also be targeted? This could cause the program to get stuck on a single dynasty instead of progressing smoothly down the list. One solution would be to adhere strictly to the list, exempting heirs until next year's list was published; this would have the additional advantage of giving the heirs an opportunity to (wisely) divest themselves of their wealth. Another problem is that lists of the world's wealthiest individuals might be hard to come by after the first year, but this could be interpreted as a sign of progress. It's also possible that the strategy could backfire by generating massive sympathy for billionaires, but this seems less likely.

Terrorizing the rich is a form of psychological warfare, primarily useful for its symbolic value. Even if it only succeeded for a short time, it could still accomplish its main goal of convincing people that it doesn't pay to be rich. Even a temporary rejection of affluence as an organizing principle of society would buy desperately needed time, not only "time for nature" [cf. Pentti Linkola] but also time for alternative role models to gain traction.

Another idea is selective targeting of urban and industrial infrastructure. For example many densely populated urban areas have nuclear power plants very near them, or even in them. A single well-executed strike similar to 9-11, but directed at a suitably located nuclear facility, could render an entire world capital uninhabitable for thousands of years. This would send a powerful message that "business as usual" was over. Unlike 9-11, the target wouldn't merely be symbolic however: significant population reduction would occur, at least temporarily. Attacking a huge dam might have a similar effect, particularly if the dam is upstream of a major urban center. The advantage of this approach is that the ensuing flood would wash away much of the detritus of civilization, instead of leaving behind a radioactive wasteland.

How do such behavior modification strategies differ from the efforts of Islamic fundamentalists? Wouldn't such strategies merely play into the hands of militant theocracy? No doubt they would. The Taliban's desire to return humanity to the middle ages springs from an entirely different world-view, but the result would be much the same. Once industrial society is in shambles it won't matter whether the final blows were struck in the name of Allah, Santa Claus, or biological diversity. Premodern human societies were frequently gripped by expansionist lunacies no more or less irrational than Islam or Christianity. Tribal life was anything but peaceful, as anthropology makes all too clear. Human violence had relatively little effect on the environment until quite recently, but this is hardly reassuring.

This brings us to the central paradox of the behavior modification strategy. Let's assume that humans are somehow persuaded or coerced into abandoning the pursuit of material wealth, and adopt a more humble way of life. What guarantee do we have that the whole sorry history of imperialism won't simply repeat itself, from chiefs, princes, kings and emperors all the way on up to dictators and oligarchs? The answer of course is there is no such guarantee. It's a real risk and has to be weighed against the risks of other strategies, such as attempting to cut out the cancer. The larger question is whether even eliminationist strategies have any chance of succeeding in the long term. How do we know that eliminating humans is good enough? Given enough time, what prevents apes from evolving right back into humans, or into something even more ruthless and self-defeating? Should we eliminate apes too while we're at it? Or all mammals? Where do we draw the line?

One solution to this paradox is to consider that since humans are the only one of Earth's lifeforms currently opposing further evolutionary progress, removing humans at least opens the door to some possible solution. Without humans, genetic selection resumes its previous role as the sole determinant of what works and what doesn't. If evolution eventually creates something as bad or worse than us, at least we won't be responsible for whatever catastrophe ensues.

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### **3. Probabilities**

Impractical and improbable: If someone had proposed back in 1990 that next year a few guys armed with box cutters were going to demolish the Twin Towers, you probably would have dismissed that notion as highly improbable, yet it occurred nonetheless. Humans aren't super-predators for nothing. They can be amazingly resourceful, and given sufficient motivation, are capable of stunning reversals and other complex behaviors that are essentially unpredictable. The question is not whether humans are capable of making themselves harmless to their environment, but whether they are likely to do so. This depends on many factors, such as stubbornness and our ability to stay focused on long-term threats. Human evolutionary programming was necessarily determined by the demands of our initial environment (Africa). As E.O. Wilson points out, many of the attributes that served us well on the savannah turned out to have monstrous aspects in mass industrial society. So for example our tendency to focus on the present to the exclusion of all else might have been very effective when we were hunting large mammals with primitive weapons, but now makes it difficult for us to stay focused on long-term threats such as population growth and climate change. Similarly our tendency towards aggression and competition was hard-wired into us, a successful adaptation inherited from the countless apex predators that have preceded us, but in mass society it interferes with our ability to cooperate on the necessary scale. People are hard-wired to be altruistic towards their kin, and hostile towards everyone else, and while that strategy was successful in a tribal world with very low population

density, it's unlikely to succeed in a world of seven billion people run by governments armed with nuclear weapons.

## 4. Tribalism

Compared to industrialism, tribal societies caused relatively little long-term damage to their environment. This was particularly true of tribal societies that were primarily gathering-based and highly mobile. If you're always on the move, tracking seasonal changes and patterns of food availability, no matter how abundant a food source may be at a particular moment, there's no advantage to harvesting more of it than you can carry. In such a society, accumulation of wealth is impractical, and environmental impacts are spread out over a large area. In a sedentary society capable of long-term food storage, accumulation of material wealth can become a central organizing principle, resulting in significant environmental impact. Some sedentary tribal societies continued to repudiate wealth, but the record is mixed. Many of them caused mass extinctions, particularly on islands [cf. Maori], despite their professed reverence for nature. Tribal societies also exhibited slow technological progress (e.g. from sticks to throwing spears to arrows) suggesting that given different conditions they were perfectly capable of evolving imperialism and industrialism.

Modern tribal societies are understandably eager to portray themselves as noble Earth lovers, and to portray Europeans as corrupt, pathetic science addicts. American Indians generally considered white civilization to be unworthy and contemptible, and ridiculed its softness and dependence on book learning [cf. Russell Means]. Indians adopted horses and guns quickly enough, but this doesn't weaken their argument, as they only did so under extreme duress. At the time of the European invasion, many Indians claimed that they would rather die than live the civilized life of the white man, and they did die, in huge numbers, often after fighting long and bitter battles.

While the Indian critique has considerable merit, it obscures a paradox: Indians and other aboriginal people were and are unarguably human, with no meaningful genetic differences from modern Europeans. They carry within them the same seeds of destruction that all humans carry: the potential to explode into full-blown dominators without warning. The difference is merely cultural programming, which is transient and unpredictable. In effect the potential for cancerous runaway growth is latent in all human societies, because it's genetically hardwired into us. Individuals or even entire societies may exhibit altruism and lead relatively harmless, commendable lives, but it's an accident waiting to happen. The tendency towards unlimited growth is always there, a devastating force barely restrained by superstitious traditions. One day people are giving each other gifts and imagining that animals feel sorry for them, and the next day they're building boats and colonizing distant islands, eating all the birds and fish, and letting loose their rats and dogs to wipe out entire ecosystems.

Aboriginals have their share of hubris and may overstate their case, but they're right in principle: modern humans are corrupt and contemptible, and industrial civilization is a death-culture, or as the Hopi call it, "Koyaanisqatsi", crazy life. Whatever shortcomings aboriginals may have had, they did not cause the current global eco-catastrophe. On the contrary, aboriginal societies are the only models we have of humans living in sustainable balance with nonhumans. Easter Island and similar counterexamples aside, on balance tribal ways of life persisted relatively harmlessly



for countless millennia. More importantly, the deficiencies of tribalism are at least in theory correctible, whereas industrial society's disdain for nonhumans and rejection of biological limits make it fundamentally flawed and incorrigible.

## 5. Species Holocaust

Humans are carrying out a ferocious assault against nonhuman life. Even though our rate of population growth has declined slightly since the 1970s, the rate of species extinction continues to accelerate. The rainforests are burning, the polar icecaps are melting, the oceans are dying, and deserts are spreading rapidly. By conservative estimates, we are exterminating an entire species every thirty minutes. When I say exterminate, I mean that species is vanished forever, irretrievably lost; we have permanently erased its genetic information from earth's hard drive. The only phrase I know of that adequately describes our behavior is species holocaust.

I use the word 'holocaust' because it's usually associated with the worst atrocity humans have ever publicly admitted blame for, the Nazi holocaust. To those who will inevitably accuse me of being disrespectful to the millions of victims, I say this: The problem is not that my use of the word holocaust lessens the suffering of humans. The problem is that we are so indifferent to the suffering of nonhumans that no word other than holocaust has resonance for us. Despite the Nazis' considerable efforts, Jewish culture survives to this day; not so for the millions of entire species that humans have exterminated just in the last century. This statement is profoundly offensive to most people, but for the wrong reason. People are offended, not because I confront them with a hideous atrocity in which they actively collaborate, but because I dare to suggest that nonhuman life could have as much value as human life.

Many people believe that the Nazi atrocities were an aberration, an exception, but in my view they were a predictable extension of industrial techniques that had already been used on animals for fifty years. Pictures of concentration camps disturb me, not because of the piles of bodies, but because the technology—train cars, barbed wire, electric fences, smokestacks—looks so familiar. We use the term 'rendering' to describe the process whereby an animal is converted into useful raw materials. The Nazis literally built rendering factories for humans, and they hid them in remote areas for the much the same reasons we still hide slaughterhouses and factory farms today. Most Germans in the 1930s would have agreed that getting rid of Jews and Gypsies was desirable, but that doesn't mean they wanted to do it themselves, or even know how it was done, anymore than we would want to kill cows, or watch them be skinned and torn to pieces.

## 6. Humanism

Humanism is "a doctrine, attitude, or way of life centered on human interests or values." Note the use of the word "centered." Humanism is an *anthrocentric* world-view, a world-view centered on man, and behind that world-view is a belief that can be traced at least as far back as the early humanists of ancient Greece; the belief that *man is the measure of all things*. In other words, without man, events on earth would be meaningless, because meaning comes from man.

Anthrocentrism can be seen as the root of a tree of related conclusions: that man is the über-species, the crown of creation, at the top of a pyramid of evolution, that the earth was made for man, and that he can, should and indeed must, dominate it. The Christian religion spells out these conclusions quite clearly. For example, the first chapter of the bible not only states that man should be fruitful and multiply, but that he should subdue the earth, and “have dominion over...every living thing that moveth upon the earth.”

Antihumanism rejects the notion that man is the measure of all things, and substitutes a new, entirely opposite notion: that *people are stupid monkeys*. This should not be construed as an indictment of monkeys; the idea is not that monkeys are bad, but that humans are giving monkeys a bad name.

The notion that people are stupid monkeys hinges on the word “stupid.” This word implies the existence of some value system which is not obvious, and must be explained. In the antihuman value system, life is the most precious thing in the universe, and because humans choose to destroy life on an enormous scale, they are not only stupid, they are the lowliest, most unworthy species ever to evolve on earth.

Humans dominate the earth because they believe that humans *should* dominate the earth. It's impossible to separate the *belief* of anthrocentrism from the *behavior* of domination; one justifies the other. This brings us to the second definition of antihumanism: being against humans. Antihumanism opposes humans, as a species, because human behavior is anti-life. Humans are making a conscious choice to place their interests above the well-being of life, and this is not merely foolish or misguided, it is shameful and criminal. If humans are unable—for whatever reason—to exist in a way that supports life, then humans are unfit, and must be eliminated.

When Copernicus challenged the long-held belief that the earth was at the center of our solar system, he faced ridicule and punishment, not because he threatened astrology, but because he threatened the anthrocentric establishment of his time—the church. Antihumanists should expect the same treatment, or worse, because today's anthrocentric establishment—industrial society—is vastly more powerful and dependent on domination, and what's at stake is not merely our relationship to the universe, but our very existence.

## 7. Religion

- proof that humans are stupid
- most powerful military force in the world controlled by religious maniacs
- burning bush? talking snake? dividing the ocean in two with bare hands? jesus? allah? ganesh? buddha? gods and goddesses? magical forces? heaven? angels with harps floating around on clouds? easter bunny? santa claus? tooth fairy?
- for most of our existence human knowledge has consisted primarily of superstitious nonsense, total idiocy, lunacy
- many of humanity's worst crimes against nonhumans and humans alike have been justified by spirituality
- pagan witchy nonsense is no better than christian or muslim or hindu or buddhist nonsense: some forms of spiritual nonsense lend themselves more easily to social control

and are therefore more immediately dangerous but all are equally irrational and therefore equally destructive of critical thinking and grasp of reality

- people are programmed biologically to be gullible, to love simple mindless solutions and to hate cognitive dissonance, paradoxes and contradictions that require complex thought
- spirituality as illness
- just because humans are susceptible to spirituality doesn't make it desirable behavior; humans are also susceptible to greed, xenophobia, murderous rage, and many other destructive behaviors
- in theory society has an interest in limiting or eliminating destructive human impulses
- human childishness and gullibility has only been overcome with tremendous effort, and despite much violent opposition (Copernicus, Darwin, etc.); what progress towards real knowledge humans have made has been severely limited by the irrational constraints of imperialism, mass society, etc.
- flat earth? earth the center of the solar system? universe only six thousand years old? all believed until very recently [and still widely believed]
- dippy nonsense
- believers routinely claim that their superstitions are scientific and get horribly offended when this is challenged
- mixing nonsense with science doesn't make the nonsense true, anymore than putting a fox and a bird in blender makes a flying fox
- misunderstanding of the nature of science and the principle of falsifiability
- afterlife, or the idea that after death you're going to the "happy place" is not falsifiable, and is outside the domain of science at best; also known as childish escapist nonsense
- extropians, futurism, links between catholicism and technological utopianism
- earth as a stepping stone to the stars, no different than going to heaven; either way, we're going somewhere else, to the happy place, so we don't care what happens here on earth
- rejection of the terms of biological existence, of our animalness
- psychological underpinning: fear of life and death
- myth of humans as superior beings, crown of creation, leads inevitably to speciesism, exceptionalism, domination, destruction of nonhumans
- absurd insistence that we're not animals, or not subject to biological limits
- evolutionary problem: human consciousness seems unable to cope with awareness of its own death, causes severe psychosis which other animals don't appear to share
- most of what we know about our world is very recent knowledge: periodic table, astronomy, mathematics, geology, genetics and DNA, most of this happened in the last 200 years
- just because people are functional doesn't mean they're rational
- ronald reagan didn't get out of bed in the morning without consulting the white house astrologer
- we haven't had a secular president since richard nixon
- government and corporations alike are largely controlled by people who believe in complete nonsense
- no wonder the world is such a mess
- religion as child abuse

- young children learn languages easily, learning several as easily as one, whereas adults have a much harder time learning languages; this is because the human brain is prewired to learn languages during a specific age range (cf. Chomsky)
- if the child is not taught any language during this age range, serious mental damage occurs; the child is essentially mentally retarded; consequently not teaching children language constitutes a form of child abuse; this is generally recognized by modern societies
- why should critical thinking be any different?
- teaching a child nonsense produces a similar result, and is equally a form of abuse
- in the part of the child's brain where critical thinking is supposed occur, instead we find a soft gooey substance, like cream cheese
- most modern people are still walking around with cream cheese in their brain where their critical thinking capacity is supposed to be, but this doesn't prevent them from being fully functional, successful adults, or even from becoming rich and powerful; on the contrary, it helps, since mass society is presently organized in a highly irrational and self-defeating way
- people with a good grasp of reality tend to have less impact precisely because they see the tremendous power of irrational, magical thinking in human society, and become overwhelmed, defeatist, and resigned to their fate; they tend to spend too much energy fighting to maintain their convictions against the shit-tide of nonsense from the legions of zombies
- on the other hand the zombies get plenty of positive reinforcement and find strength in numbers
- "the best lack all conviction, while the worst are full of passionate intensity"
- tragic paradox: humans have acquired most of their factual knowledge about their surroundings in the last few hundred years, the same period in which they've ravaged their environment
- knowledge as a destructive force
- humans were only truly harmless when they were gibbering morons, flat-earthers, incapable of grasping the even most elementary truths of arithmetic and logic
- leads to: "intelligence snuffs itself out" [cf. E.O.Wilson]

stuff from original outline:

Catholicism & other "conservative" [wrong adjective] religions (anti-earth, escapist)

Opposed to euthanasia, abortion, sex-education, sex for pleasure (non-procreative sex), why? (contrast with CoE) What do they all have in common?

All concerned with the body

Body smells, tastes, eats, shits, has sexual urges, gets sick, dies

Body as reminder that we are animals (and stupid ones at that) link to humans as stupid monkeys

Transhumanism: downloading, cryonics, AI, bionics, "smart foods"

Conquering outer space

A. Ginsberg's "Howl": Moloch whose name is the mind

Loss of humanity

"Liberation" from "limitations" of body

Anti-biological emphasis

Star Trek & sci-fi connection: link to function of TV and propaganda as example

One world – one future

Link to catholicism: expansionist, anti-biological, anti-sex, escapist, heaven vs. outer space